

The Impact of Branding

Presentation
Washington State DOT
Public Transportation Conference

Ilium Associates, Inc.
Bellevue, Washington

Apple. Snapple. Intel. Nike.

Harley Davidson. Nordstrom.

“THE ESSENCE OF GREATNESS
IS IN THE CAPACITY OF THE BRAND
TO CREATE AN EMOTIONAL LINK
WITH THE CUSTOMER.”

The Power of Branding

- Increased sales
- Increased customer loyalty
- Improved reputation
- Increased value

Why Public Transit Should Brand

1. Increase Service Awareness

- Agencies with a mission involving behavior change compete for attention

2. Solidify Reputation or Show Change In Direction

- Among non-riding taxpaying public
- Among community leadership
- Among riders
- Among employees

Why Public Transit Should Brand

3. Increase Consumer Appeal

- Perception of service, who rides

4. Focus Marketing on Generating Trial

- Less awareness, more motivation

Ilium Transit Brand Experience

- 30+ years in transit marketing communications and design
- Most recent brand work: Intercity Transit (Olympia), RTC (Reno), Gwinnett County (Atlanta), Phoenix (BRT), Sound Transit, DCTA (Dallas), Meadowlink (NJ), Treasure Coast (Fla.)

What Decision Makers Say

- Will it increase ridership?
- Will it influence image, service perception?
- Will it matter?
- Is it worth the money?
- Is it a silver bullet?

Answers

- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- No

Will It Increase Ridership?

- Lansing: increases 10 years in a row
- LA Commuter Express: stopped 5 year decline
- Dallas: increases 5+ years in a row
- San Antonio: increases 5+ years in a row
- Orlando: double digit increases over several years

Will It Influence Image?

- Dallas: complete change
- Orlando: complete turnaround
- San Antonio: complete change
- North County Transit: quantifiable 'yes'

Will It Matter?

- Gwinnett County Transit Case Study
- Phoenix Rapid Case Study

Gwinnett Express Story

- Largest county in US without transit
- Create image of dependability, strength
- Create image that is different
- Create image identifiable with county
- 800+ new riders in less than 9 months



VEHICLE GRAPHICS

GWINNETT COUNTY TRANSIT

Phoenix Rapid Story

- New brand, buses replace current express routes
- Defining the Phoenix transit family
- Changing the perception of transit service
 - Speed
 - Who rides
- Immediate and long lasting ridership increase



BUS RAPID TRANSIT IDENTITY & VEHICLE

CITY OF PHOENIX

Is It Worth The Money?

- New brand for a transit agency is a major investment
 - most important marketing decision
- Impact is long lasting
 - a brand constantly communicates
- Compare investment in brand to cost of communications that generate awareness
 - bus exterior is #1 source of awareness
- Foundation for an effective marketing program

Is It A Silver Bullet?

- Evidence says no
 - Dallas Board Meetings
 - Sound Transit/Monorail \$\$
 - Orlando 'not ready for LRT'
 - LA service performance

Creating An Emotional Link

- Well-defined purpose
- Must clearly reflect community served
- Involving community and employees in the process
- Every image counts toward achieving impact
- Every part of the organization must contribute to brand image

